Meeting of NDC

1654. MISS MABEL REBELLO:
SHRI B.J. PANDA:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether a meeting of National Development Council was held in December last;

(b) if so, issues discussed and the targets fixed for growth;

(c) the proposed action plan to generate additional employment opportunities both in labour intensive and others; and

(d) the action plan to help States facing alarming fiscal deficit?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI SATYABRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) and (b) The 50th meeting of the National Development Council (NDC) was held on 21st December, 2002. The agenda of this meeting was to consider the Tenth Five Year Plan (2002—07). The NDC unanimously approved the Tenth Five Year Plan, which envisages an annual average growth rate of 8% of GDP for the Tenth Plan period.

(c) and (d) The Tenth Plan proposes to generate 50 million employment opportunities during the Tenth Plan period. To achieve this objective, it is expected that the 8% annual average growth will lead to 30 million opportunities through the growth process alone, and another 20 million will be created through interventions in specific sectors and activities. The thrust areas identified in the Plan include agriculture, irrigation, agro-forestry, small and medium enterprises, information communication technology and tourism. The Tenth Plan identified fiscal correction as one of the critical areas for improving the financial position of the states. Pursuant to the recommendations of the Eleventh Finance Commission (EFC), the Ministry of Finance has already drawn up a scheme of Medium Term Fiscal Reform Plan (MTFRP), which *inter-alia* aims at restoring the financial health of the State Governments. In addition, a debt swap mechanism has been proposed for reducing the interest burden of the States.